

2010 Record of Public Comments Received by the Alaska Health Care Commission

Updated: 1-2-2011

Subject	Commenter	Summary of Comments	Form & Date
Access to Care; Alaskans with Brain Injuries	Jennifer Charvet; Alaska Brain Injury Network; Anchorage	The needs of Alaskans with brain injuries are great and span the entire health spectrum. The Network has a ten-year state plan to best meet the needs of Alaskans and suggest it may be of help in the Commission's work.	Public Hearing 10-14-10
Workforce; Recruitment and Retention	Rebekah Smith; 4 th year WWAMI Student; Anchorage	In order to keep Alaskan medical students in Alaska, there needs to be more educational opportunities here, specifically more residency options.	Public Hearing 10-14-10
PPACA; Insurance Market Reform	Pat Luby; AARP Alaska; Anchorage	The State of Alaska should implement the PPACA provision extending dependent coverage to 26 years of age for the State retiree health plan.	Public Hearing 10-14-10
Role of Nurses in Health Reform; Workforce	Debbie Thompson; Alaska Nurses' Association; Anchorage	The Alaska Nurses' Association is in support of the Commission and recognizes the importance of the Commission's work. A representative from the group will be present at all further meetings, and the Association would like to be as involved as possible in the meetings. Ms. Thompson was later asked to discuss the recommendations that the Nurses Association have for the Commission in increasing the amount of nurses in Alaska as well as the quality of life of nurses.	Public Hearing 10-14-10
Workforce; Recruitment & Retention	Shelley Hughes; Alaska Primary Care Association	The licensing process should be more efficient than 6-12 months long. The scope of practice barriers need to be removed. A state controlled incentive program needs to be established for recruitment and retention.	Public Hearing 11-16-10
PPACA; Medicare Access	Woolsey Lent; concerned citizen	The Commission should support Sen. Begich's Medicare state grant provision included in the Patient Protection & Affordable Care Act.	Public Hearing 11-16-10
Long term care	Kay Branch; Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC)	ANTHC recently completed a feasibility study on development of a Native long term care facility. Alaska has the fastest growing senior population, but has added no new nursing home beds (except 2 in Homer and 8 in Juneau) since 1980s. The Commission should included long term care as part of the continuum of health care.	Public Hearing 11-16-10

Prevention; Community Health Data	Katherine Farnham (on behalf of Elizabeth Ripley, MatSu Health Foundation)	MatSu is working on a community health assessment. DHSS needs permanent, sustainable community health data, to support local coalitions' work. Offered to present at further meeting on idea for public-private partnership to develop this data system. Goal: better access to existing health data.	Public Hearing 11-16-10
Workforce; Emergency Medical Services	Dr. Koehler, Ft. Wainwright/ Fairbanks; ACEMS	Volunteer pre-hospital emergency medical workers are critical and should be included in health workforce planning.	Public Hearing 11-16-10
Prevention; Nutrition & Physical Activity; Dieticians	Leslie Shallcross; Alaska Dietetic Association	Include Registered Dieticians in health care planning. Improving nutrition and engagement in physical activity are important health care strategies.	Public Hearing 11-16-10
Insurance Benefit Design; Spiritual Care	Bev Smith	Requesting that state of Alaska make appropriate accommodation for spiritual care in any key health care bills to ensure that the public will continue to have access to spiritual care in conjunction with any state health care reform legislation.	Meeting With Executive Director 12-8-10

Comments Received During Public Comment Period (Dec. 14-30, 2010)

Subject	Commenter	Summary of Contents	Form and Date
Health Reform	Arndt von Hippel, M.D. (ret.)	Dr. von Hippel provided an electronic copy of his book <u>Better Health Care at Half the Cost</u> . (331 pages; available to commission members on request)	Email 12-15-10
Workforce; Emergency Medical Services	Danita Koehler, M.D.	Include volunteer EMTs in workforce assessment and development.	Email 12-22-10
Insurance Benefit Design; Rehabilitation Services	Cindy Chapman, Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (Arlington, VA)	Alaska should include Rehabilitation Services as a covered service in insurance benefit design under PPACA.	Letter dated 12-21-10 transmitted via email 12-23-10
Medical Home	Eric Britten	Support near term development of an Alaska medical home pilot project and development of an Alaska medical home model. Add recommendation that Alaska medical home pilot projects and future model include standards that ensure evidence-based medicine guides decision making.	Letter dated 12-27-10 transmitted via email 12-27-10

Behavioral Health; Long Term Care	Delisa Culpepper, Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority (Anchorage)	Behavioral health and long term care are important and costly issues in the health care discussion. Keep them on the list of issues and strategies for future study and recommendations by the commission, and reference this list in the report.	Email 12-29-10
Rural Health; Healthy Lifestyles; Workforce; Health Information Technology	Nancy Merriman, Denali Commission (Anchorage)	Highlight unique factors that rural Alaskans face in living healthy lifestyles. Include Behavioral Health Aide and Dental Health Aide/Therapists in discussions on Alaskan innovations in health care. The supply and distribution of sound health care facilities across the state should be addressed. Explore graduate medical education opportunities provided through the Affordable Care Act. The Alaska EHR Alliance updated their physician survey in March 2010, and completed the review process and has recommended two EHR vendors for private practices in Alaska.	Letter dated 12-29-10 transmitted via email 12-30-10
Health Care Definition; Stakeholder Engagement; Billing; Health System Measures	Randi Sweet	Include a definition of “health care.” Look for opportunities to involve other organizations in health system improvement. Investigate opportunities for streamlining billing processes as part of payment bundling and primary care innovation strategies. Reframe health status indicators so they are positive to encourage healthy lifestyles, rather than negative (e.g., identify % of Alaskans how don’t smoke, not % of Alaskans who do).	Email 12-30-10
Evidence-Based Medicine; Patient Responsibility	Elizabeth Turgeon, M.D. (Wasilla)	Emphasize patient responsibility – don’t just emphasize provider quality and evidence-based medicine. The medical home model defined by the Academy of Family Physicians would be an effective tool in the plan for Alaska health care.	Email 12-30-10
Patient Responsibility; Evidence-based Medicine; Workforce; Patient-Centered Medical Home; Cost of Care	Deborah Kiley, DNP, ANP, FAANP (Anchorage)	Incorporate personal engagement/ responsibility throughout all initiatives. What are the outcomes of evidence-based medicine programs? Studies on workforce should not be limited to physicians. Patient-centered care has been practiced by nurses for a century – include nurse practitioner practices in medical home pilots. The cost of health care needs to include an analysis of what it costs providers to operate a practice in Alaska.	Email 12-30-10
Patient Responsibility	Beth L.	Patients need to be expected to take responsibility and be compliant.	Email 12-30-10

Primary Care; Payment Reform; Tort Reform	Christopher Sahlstrom, MD (Wasilla)	Agree that primary care is the foundation of a cost-effective and high quality health care system. Especially support family medicine physicians. Concerned about bundled payment. High costs are not due to fee-for-service, but to defensive medicine. Alaska needs strict tort reform.	Email 12-30-10
Behavioral Health	J. Kate Burkhart, Advisory Board on Alcoholism & Drug Abuse and Alaska Mental Health Board (Juneau)	Do not ignore the significance of the behavioral health challenges and the importance of behavioral health needs and issues in Alaska. Include a more holistic view of health and incorporate behavioral health in the Commission's developing plan.	Letter dated 12-30-10 transmitted via e-mail 12-30-10
Healthy Lifestyles; Workforce; Medical Homes; Medicaid; Veterans' Care	Shelley Hughes, Alaska Primary Care Association (Anchorage)	The Commission should recommend that the Governor lead a health challenge encouraging healthy lifestyles, support a state loan repayment/incentive program to recruit health care providers, and support a medical home pilot project. During 2011 the Commission should study access to and usage of primary care, and also underinsurance. During 2011 the Commission should consider as strategies Denali KidCare expansion, inclusion of behavioral health providers at primary care clinics in State Medicaid Plan, streamlined processes for Veterans who do not have access to VHA facilities, policies to encourage health care performed by all types of Health Aides, and efficient health professions licensing.	Document transmitted via e-mail 12-30-10
Medical Homes	Marilyn Kasmar, Alaska Primary Care Association (APCA) (Anchorage)	Medical homes empower patients to become more active participants in the management of their health, improve patient satisfaction, increase clinical quality and safety, improve provider and staff satisfaction and is a catalyst for controlling the escalating cost of health care. APCA is working to support transformation of Alaska's Community Health Centers to medical home – however, current nationally accepted medical home standards cannot be widely implemented across Alaska. Include a recommendation in the 2010 report supporting the commencement of planning for an Alaska medical home pilot in 2011.	Letter dated 12-30-10 transmitted via e-mail 12-30-10
Long Term Care	Denise Daniello, Alaska Commission on Aging (Juneau)	Seniors, persons with developmental disabilities, and other vulnerable Alaskans depend on long-term supports to help them remain in their homes and communities.	e-mail 12-31-10